LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
3 3298 00285 8380

BOARD OF PAROLE FOR THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 1, 2002 TO MARCH 31, 2003

DOC
BC
P32
B
2002/03
c.3

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY
VICTORIA
AUG 2 6 2003

104-07322/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Chair ---- 1

Background ---- 2

Mission Statement ---- 3

Organization of the Board ---- 4

Purpose ---- 5

Strategic Plan ---- 6

Objectives ---- 7

Board Membership ---- 9

The Parole Process ---- 11

Operations and Statistics ---- 14

Training and Professional Development ---- 18

Program Highlights ---- 19

Events and Actions ---- 20

National and International Involvement ---- 21

Budget ---- 22

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am pleased to present the Annual Report (2002-2003) of the Board of Parole for the Province of British Columbia. This report is published on the Board's website: http://www.gov.bc.ca/bcparole/

I was appointed Chair of the Board on April 22nd, 2002 after serving as a Board Member for two years and Vice Chair (Acting Chair) for one year. This Fiscal Year has been exciting and challenging for me and for the Board. With the confirmation of the mandate of the Board through the Administrative Justice Review and Core Programs Review we have moved toward a consolidation of practice and rebuilding of our membership.

We have also focussed our efforts on developing an action plan to modernize our legislation, the Parole Act of British Columbia and the Parole Act Regulation. This legislation has served us well in the past but anticipated collateral legislation in Fiscal Year 2003-2004 has provided an opportunity for review in this Fiscal Year.

The Administrative Justice Review has provided a framework for standardization between the various tribunals and this, in turn, has provided an opportunity for the Board to examine its relationship with government and other justice partners. We anticipate formalizing our relationship with government in Fiscal Year 2003-2004 through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Through the many changes of the past two years, in Government and including the restructuring of Corrections Branch, I am pleased to say that the Board continues to be the single release authority in British Columbia, a voice for restorative justice and avenue for victims to become involved in the release process. We continue to espouse the values of fairness and openness and have strengthened these values despite the organizational change that we have witnessed in our partners.

Tracey Thompson, Chair
BC Board of Parole

BACKGROUND

The Board of Parole for the Province of British Columbia has been a continuously operating Board for over fifty years. Originally constituted to provide release decision-making on the indeterminate portion of definite/indeterminate sentences for young adult offenders, the Board was reconstituted as a full provincial paroling authority in the early 1980's when definite/indeterminate sentences were abolished.

The Board operates under the federal authority of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and the provincial Parole Act.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Board of Parole for the Province of British Columbia, a component of the criminal justice system, is an independent administrative tribunal whose members reflect the diversity of our province and are appointed on the merit of their community involvement and decision making ability.

The Board contributes to the protection of society by deciding if eligible offenders in provincial correctional facilities, who do not pose undue risk, will be permitted to serve their full sentences under supervision in the community with conditions of release set by the Board.

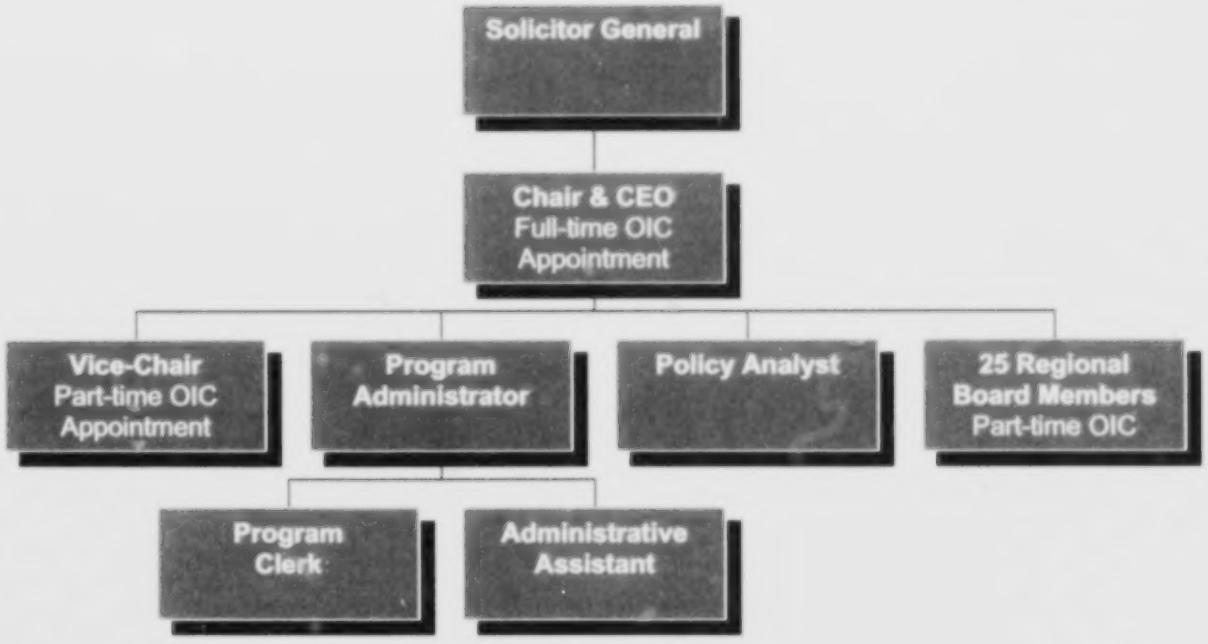
The Board considers information from the justice system, offenders, victims and the community and strives to afford offenders an opportunity to redress individual and social relationships that have been harmed.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

The BC Board of Parole is an independent administrative tribunal. All members are Order in Council appointments and are selected by merit and represent British Columbia's commitment to public participation in the justice process. The Board is composed of a full-time Chair who reports to the Solicitor General, a part-time Vice Chair and twenty five part-time Board Members who serve on an as-needed basis. The Board, through the Chair, strives to maintain gender equity, ethno-cultural balance, geographical representation and a dynamic range of age and experience in order to be responsive to the various communities and stake-holders in British Columbia.

Candidates must undergo an extensive interview to examine their decision-making ability, awareness of the dynamics and needs of offenders and victims, knowledge of the justice system and leadership and accountability to the community. Written assignments are also part of the pre-screening process.

The Board is supported by four administrative staff that conduct the Board's business function and respond to changes in legislation, government program initiatives, the general public, interest groups and offenders.

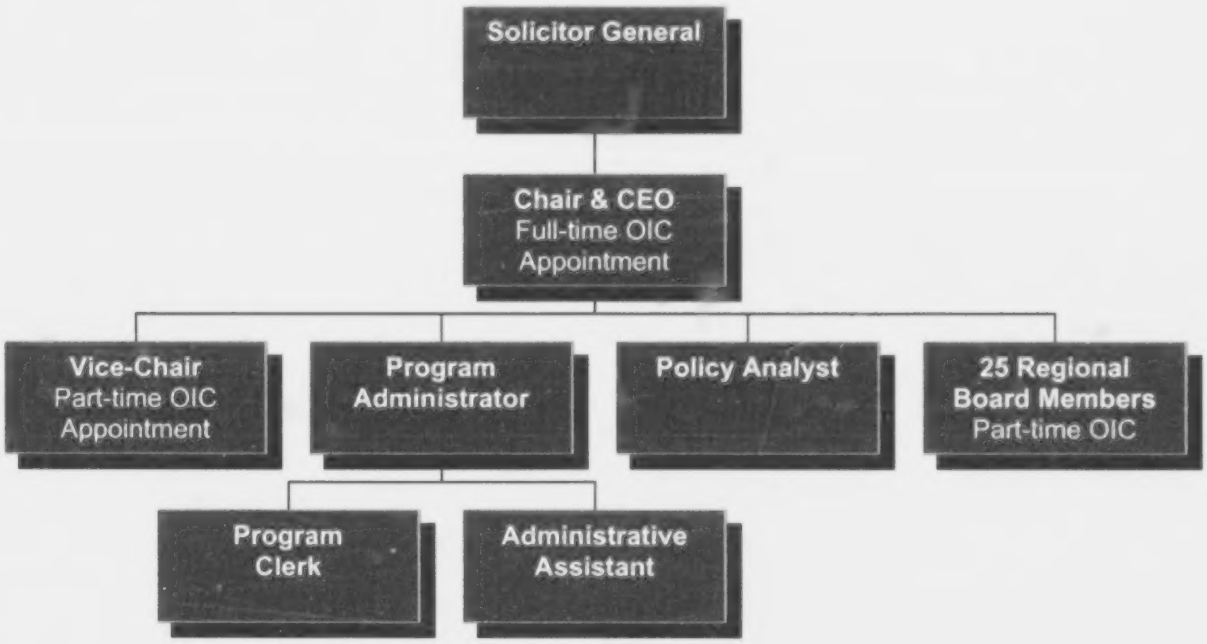


ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

The BC Board of Parole is an independent administrative tribunal. All members are Order in Council appointments and are selected by merit and represent British Columbia's commitment to public participation in the justice process. The Board is composed of a full-time Chair who reports to the Solicitor General, a part-time Vice Chair and twenty five part-time Board Members who serve on an as-needed basis. The Board, through the Chair, strives to maintain gender equity, ethno-cultural balance, geographical representation and a dynamic range of age and experience in order to be responsive to the various communities and stake-holders in British Columbia.

Candidates must undergo an extensive interview to examine their decision-making ability, awareness of the dynamics and needs of offenders and victims, knowledge of the justice system and leadership and accountability to the community. Written assignments are also part of the pre-screening process.

The Board is supported by four administrative staff that conduct the Board's business function and respond to changes in legislation, government program initiatives, the general public, interest groups and offenders.



PURPOSE

The British Columbia Board of Parole contributes to public safety by rendering decisions on applications for parole from prisoners in provincial correctional centres. The purpose of conditional release is to contribute to the maintenance of a just, peaceful and safe society.

Board members make informed release decisions on the timing and conditions of release that will best help the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals into the community as law-abiding citizens by assessing risk and providing for the appropriate management of offenders through the reintegration process.

In accordance with legislation and the principles of restorative justice, we strive to represent and be sensitive to a concept of community that includes offenders, the public, victims and other interested and concerned individuals. It is essential that we work with our partners in the criminal justice system to ensure that we receive the information required for independent decision making.

The Board operates within the legal framework of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (Canada) and the Parole Act of British Columbia.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of the strategic plan is to identify objectives or goals the Board aims to accomplish within the next four years and the strategies to be pursued in reaching those objectives. Section 101 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act documents six principles that guide parole boards as they make conditional release decisions and these form the framework for our strategic plan objectives. These principles may be summarized as follows:

1. The protection of society is the paramount consideration

2. Parole Boards are to consider all available information from their criminal justice partners, other interested parties, the victim and the offender

3. The timely exchange of relevant information with criminal justice partners and communication of policies and programs to offenders, victims and the general public enhances effectiveness and openness

4. Parole Boards should make the least restrictive determination consistent with the protection of society

5. Parole Boards should adopt appropriate policies and training programs for members

6. Offenders must be provided with relevant information, reasons for decisions and access to the review of decisions to ensure a fair and understandable conditional release process

The Board of Parole for the Province of British Columbia fully endorses these principles as the framework for the five objectives and included action statements of the strategic plan.

OBJECTIVES

Objective One – To foster excellence in Board practice

1.1 Ensure efficient and effective decision making practices that focus on the protection of society and reintegration of the offender into the community.

1.2 Provide opportunity for community input in Board decision making practice and policy.

1.3 Provide effective orientation, on-going training programs and a support structure to all Board members to ensure quality decision making, documentation practice and adherence to policy and procedure.

1.4 Provide staff with the necessary resources and training to support the Board.

1.5 Foster accountability for decisions and practices.

1.6 Promote community representation on the Board emphasizing geographic representation, cultural diversity, gender balance and a dynamic combination of age and experience.

Objective Two - To increase public confidence in and understanding of the parole process

2.1 Expand the Board's public education strategy to promote awareness of the parole process and the British Columbia Board of Parole.

2.2 Participate in community forums when the interests of the Board and community converge.

2.3 Keep the political and executive levels of government informed to enhance their understanding and support of parole and promote the work of a community based parole board.

2.4 Demonstrate Board openness and accountability by inviting observers and supporting and encouraging the participation of victims in the hearing process.

2.5 Increase cultural sensitivity in all Board processes by allowing, whenever possible, spiritual and traditional practices of diverse groups.

Objective Three - To advance the role of the Parole Board as an independent partner within the criminal justice system

3.1 Clearly communicate Board objectives and practices.

3.2 Promote productive relationships with all justice partners to facilitate creative problem solving and the development of quality standards.

3.3 Initiate and respond to opportunities for education and information sharing.

3.4 Represent and promote the interest of the Board in all related legislation and policy development.

Objective Four - To encourage the full participation of offenders in the Parole process

4.1 Work with Corrections Branch to develop strategies to increase offender confidence in the parole process.

4.2 Provide information material for distribution to offenders, victims and the general public.

4.3 Demonstrate a consistent, fair and just process.

4.4 Write decisions that provide guidance to offenders with respect to reintegration and reduced risk.

4.5 Set appropriate conditions that are the least restrictive and that are consistent with risk to the community and the needs of the offender.

Objective Five - To be a catalyst for innovation and change in the community and in the justice system

5.1 Conduct research that promotes a reasoned response to crime and community re-integration.

5.2 Challenge societies' conventional beliefs and stereotypes of offenders and the criminal justice system.

5.3 Evaluate and support alternatives to incarceration.

5.4 Work with partners in pilot projects that facilitate the successful re-integration of offenders

BOARD MEMBERSHIP 2002/2003

The Board

The Board is an independent body of community members who are appointed by Order-in-Council to make parole decisions on Federal and Provincial offenders serving a sentence in a provincial institution. Board Members come from all walks of life and from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and are trained for their task.

Board Members are recruited on their merits and must demonstrated a true sense of responsibility and interest in community affairs proven through their activities and participation, a level of ability, experience and objectivity that is consistent with the task of independent decision making, an understanding of the serious impact of their decisions on both the parole applicant, the victim and the community and a general knowledge of the justice process.

Each member of the Board, other than the Chair, holds office for a term of four years and is not eligible for reappointment to the Board.

Major Responsibilities

The major responsibility of the BC Board of Parole is to determine whether or not to grant parole in accordance with legislated criteria. The Board also has the responsibility to:

- set conditions for parole and statutory release,
- authorize suspensions if a violation of parole or statutory release occurs, and
- maintain a close working relationship with the BC Corrections Branch who provide case preparation for hearings, case management and community supervision.

Membership

Two Board Members; Kenneth Thornicroft and MaryEllen Gillan resigned from their appointments in Fiscal Year 2002-2003.

Nine Board Members; Grace Brown, Gwen Cutler, Lynn Connell, Emile DeKoninck, Alvin Dixon, Barry Gelling, Baljinder Lidhar, Lloyd McDames and Shirley Mortimer completed their four year terms in Fiscal Year 2002-2003.

Seven Board Members; Don Campbell, Ronald Watson, Marilyn Hutchinson, Henry Esau, Elaine Jeffrey, Rubiana Malla and Margit Nance were appointed in Fiscal Year 2002-2003.

The current Board Members are:

June Barens: June is an administrator and foster parent with experience in special needs and high-risk children

Don Campbell: Don is a retired firefighter who served as Fire Chief for ten years and Rotary Club member

Brien Cates: Brien is a former teacher, secondary school principal and victim assistance program volunteer

Fae Chato-Manchuk: Fae is a Registered Nurse who works as a therapist with female offenders and male violent offenders and male sex offenders

Curt Griffiths: Curt is a university professor and author

Henry Esau: Henry is a realtor and retired teacher and public school system administrator

Marilyn Hutchinson: Marilyn is the Executive Director for the Mid Island Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Nanaimo and the Vice Chair for the BC Regional Science and Technology Network

Elaine Jeffrey: Elaine has worked as a Social Worker and has delivered life skills and other related programs in provincial institutions

Shaneen LeBlanc: Shaneen is a Registered Rehabilitation Professional and freelance photographer

Rubiana Malla: Rubiana is a criminology student and advocate for persons with disabilities

Margit Nance: Margit is a television film and documentary producer and past administrator at Simon Fraser University

Robert Purgavie: Robert is a former probation administrator and Justice of the Peace

Debbie Scarborough: Debbie is a transition house co-ordinator and former RCMP auxiliary constable and victim assistance co-ordinator

Tracey Thompson: Tracey is the Chair of the Board, appointed in 2002. She is a former RCMP Constable whose background also includes emergency services, program coordination and delivery for the College of New Caledonia

Nelson Tsui: Nelson is a lawyer and columnist for a Chinese community newspaper

Ronald Watson: Ronald is a lawyer and former alderman for the City of Kamloops

Robert Wood: Robert is a former RCMP constable, corrections officer and alcohol and drug counsellor

THE PAROLE PROCESS

The Board receives its authority from the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (Canada) and the Parole Act of British Columbia.

The two criteria for release through parole are:

- the offender will not, by re-offending, present an undue risk to society before the expiration according to law of the sentence the offender is serving; and
- the release of the offender will contribute to the protection of society by facilitating the reintegration of the offender into society as a law-abiding citizen.

Eligibility

Inmates are eligible to apply for day parole at one-sixth of their sentence and full parole at one third of their sentence and at any time thereafter. The Board also conducts statutory release hearings and detention hearings for federally sentenced inmates serving their sentences in provincial institutions. Inmates are eligible for statutory release at two-thirds of their sentences.

The Application

An inmate who wishes to be considered for parole must submit an application to the Board. Institutional staff help the inmate develop a release plan for community re-entry.

The Community Services Division of the Corrections Branch investigates the content of the application and prepares an assessment of the applicant's plan.

The inmate's institution also prepares a report that evaluates the applicant's participation in programs and progress while incarcerated. Relevant medical and psychological assessments are included in the parole package.

Information relating to the applicant's current conviction, criminal history and driving history are also included in the parole package along with the remarks of the sentencing judge and victim impact statements when submitted.

The applicant may obtain letters of support and is able to invite family, friends or a lawyer to assist him or her in the parole hearing.

All applications that are presented to the Board for decision making are accompanied by standardized and verified risk/needs assessments. These assessments identify areas of risk and individual needs and are instrumental in setting release conditions.

The Hearing

Parole hearings usually take place in provincial correctional centres and are usually conducted by two Board Members. One member reviews are reserved for administrative changes to existing orders and to hearings where there is a likely decision to grant parole based on a positive community assessment and positive institutional assessment. A detention hearing, in which the Board of Parole considers the detention of certain federally sentenced offenders past their statutory

release date, takes place before a quorum of three members.

The applicant may be questioned before the Board about his/her criminal history, behaviour in custody, participation in programs, addiction history, offence patterns and release plan. The applicant may have an assistant to provide support throughout the hearing and to speak on his or her behalf at a specified point in the hearing.

On occasion, an observer may be present at a hearing. Observers may be victims of crime, members of the inmate's family, media representatives or other members of the public including special interest groups and academic researchers. The Board supports the Minister's Restorative Justice Initiatives. In keeping with one aspect of Restorative Justice, victims have been afforded the opportunity to not only attend hearings as observers but to participate in the hearing through audio or video taped statements as well as written and oral statements.

Normally, at the conclusion of the hearing, the Board in Session will ask the inmate and all others to leave the room while the Members deliberate. Each member of the Board in Session casts an independent vote. The decision is based on consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, the Chair assigns three other Board Members to conduct a new hearing. The decision and the reasons for the decision are given to the inmate in writing.

Should the Board decide to grant parole; conditions of residence, mobility, participation in treatment and reporting are included in the parole certificate issued by the Board. Violations of conditions that indicate increased risk to the community may result in the suspension of the parole, the return to custody and the subsequent revocation of the parole. A review may also determine an offender's suitability for return to the community with a change of conditions.

Decision Registry

The signed and dated hearing decision and reasons, the panel hearing schedule and the Certificate of Parole for grants are the official record of the hearing. Original copies of all these documents are on the official Board file and form the Decision Registry.

The registry provides opportunity for persons who show an interest in a specific case to get Board decisions relating to that case.

Suspension and Revocation

The Board provides a 24-hour suspension service through Board Members who have agreed to be available to police and justice workers to respond to information that indicates a change in risk and/or violations that indicate increased risk to the safety of the community.

A Suspension Warrant, issued by a Board Member, is a Canada-wide warrant

Appeals

Under current legislation there is no appeal of the Board's decisions to an outside court, tribunal or other body.

However, an inmate may apply for re-examination of a Board decision by writing to the Chair within thirty days of the decision.

Grounds for re-examination (appeal) are as follows:

- Where it can be proved that the board acted beyond its jurisdiction or refused to exercise its jurisdiction.

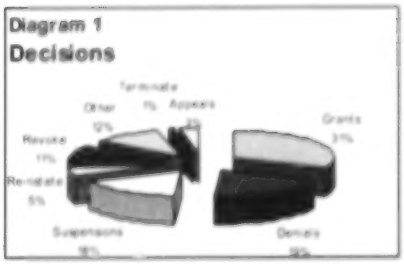
- Where it can be proved that the Board failed to observe prescribed procedures, policies or otherwise erred in law in making its decision.

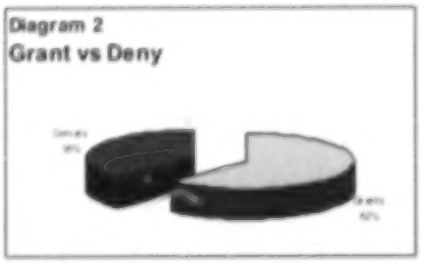
- Where it can be proved that the Board made its decision based on false information or was lacking significant evidence or overlooked other relevant material concerning the merits of the case.

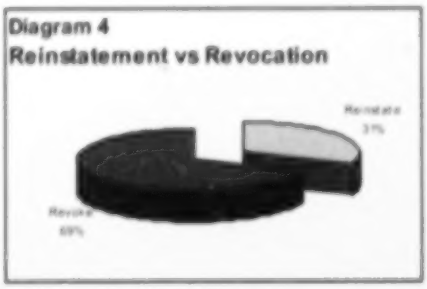
OMBUDSMAN

The Board is in the schedule of agencies that are investigated by the Ombudsman where there is a compliant. Such an enquiry, where launched, will focus on whether the board acted consistently with governing legislation, regulations or stated policies and procedures. The ombudsman may make recommendations for remedy and it is the responsibility of the board to act on that information.

OPERATIONS AND STATISTICS







Total Releases Fiscal Year 2002 - 2003
Revoked - Completed Sentence in Custody 35%
Completed Parole Successfully 65%
Completed Parole Successfully
Revoked - Completed Sentence in Custody

In Fiscal Year 2002/2003, the Board made 1598 decisions related to the conditional release of offenders. Of these, 245 or 15% were administrative decisions and did not involve a hearing with an offender.

312 offenders were denied parole. These decisions accounted for 20% of the Board's workload.

Trends

In Fiscal Year 200-2001 the Corrections Branch released electronic monitoring to the judiciary for use in conditional sentences where curfew management was necessary. This had an immediate effect on institutional counts. Previously, all provincial parole boards in Canada had witnessed the erosion of their traditional caseloads through conditional sentencing and this option, which has enhanced risk management for the judiciary in conditional sentences, has further eroded the Board's traditional caseload.

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Average daily institutional sentenced count	1798	1718	1651	1432	1240
Average daily parole count	239	204	249	262	223
Total decisions	1827	1359	1724	1783	1598
-granted	614	493	582	583	506
-denied	373	254	291	300	312
-suspended	325	236	278	294	280
-reinstated	82	65	74	59	79
-revoked	197	147	182	195	176
-Other decisions	236	164	317	352	245

In Fiscal Year 1998-1999 there were fifteen provincial facilities with an average daily sentenced offender count of 1798. The average daily parole count was 239. In Fiscal Year 1999-2000 there were thirteen provincial facilities with an average daily sentenced offender count of 1718. The average daily parole count was 204. In Fiscal Year 2000-2001 there were thirteen provincial facilities with an average daily sentenced offender count of 1651. The average daily parole count was 249. The increase in the parole count for this Fiscal Year is attributed to Corrections Branch ending the temporary absence program. In Fiscal Year 2001-2002 the average daily sentenced offender count was 1432. The average daily parole count was 263.

For Fiscal Year 2002-2003, the average daily sentenced offender count was 1240 and the average daily parole count was 223. Relative to a decreasing inmate population, the Board is maintaining a consistent grant rate and the numbers of reinstatements and revocations remain consistent relative to a lower daily average count.

Accurate suspension and revocation rates cannot be reported as offenders may be granted parole in a previous fiscal year and be suspended in another. Nevertheless, the Board can report on suspensions as a total of workload. The percentage of time spent on suspending offenders is holding steady at between 20-22%. In Fiscal Year 2002-2003 the Board revoked the paroles of 176 offenders which accounted for 14% of the total workload.

Federal Female Offenders

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Total decisions	78	98	71
-Denied	5	9	7
-Granted	37	41	33
-Suspended	25	17	15
-reinstated	4	6	6
-revoked	16	11	13

Provincial Female Offenders

Total Decisions	106	83	66
-Denied	10	15	19
-Granted	54	44	29
-Suspended	23	11	7
-Reinstated	4	4	3
-Revoked	16	6	9

In Fiscal Year 2000-2001 the Board made 78 decisions on federal female offenders that resulted in 37 grant decisions. In Fiscal Year 2001-2002 the Board made 98 decisions on federal female offenders that resulted in 98 grant decisions. In Fiscal Year 2002-2003 the Board made 71 decisions on federal female offenders that resulted in 33 grant decisions.

In Fiscal Year 2000-2001 the Board made 106 decisions on provincial female offenders that resulted in 54 grant decisions. In Fiscal Year 2001-2002 the Board made 83 decisions on provincial female offenders that resulted in 44 grant decisions. In Fiscal Year 2002-2003 the Board made 66 decisions on federal female offenders that resulted in 29 grant decisions.

The Boards involvement with federal female offenders will end March 31st, 2004. Grant decisions on provincial female offenders, who are viewed as a more needful and volatile population, have been declining.

Performance

Parole is a dynamic process and there is opportunity for offenders to fail and yet achieve eventual success. The Board and Branch continue to work toward improving the initial success rate but the Board realizes that the successful return of offenders to society is often a matter of gradually changing attitude and behaviour that has become negatively entrenched over many years.

In Fiscal Year 2002-2003, which includes offenders who may have been paroled in the previous fiscal year, 65% of all offenders (male and female) completed their paroles successfully. Of these, 54% completed their paroles without incident while on parole. A further 8% were suspended but released post-suspension and completed their paroles successfully. A further 3% were suspended and revoked but reapplied for parole and completed their paroles successfully. 35% of those afforded an opportunity of community re-entry through parole were unsuccessful.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The BC Board of Parole believes in the fundamental principle that training and professional development results in Board Members who are able to make reasoned and informed decisions on behalf of the community.

New Board Training

New Board Members were appointed in February 2003 and started their training before the end of Fiscal Year 2003-2003 but completed their training in Fiscal Year 2003-2004.

Full Board Training – Spring

Full Board training (Spring session) took place on April 29th and 30th. The agenda included presentations by Corrections Branch administrators on Corrections Branch developments and conditional sentences and offender population trends that affect parole.

The National Parole Board attended and presented on the subject of post release interventions and Victim Services Branch attended and presented on the subject of changes to the Branch. Other topics included: treatment and management of substance abuse and a discussion on the authority for administrative decision making.

Full Board Training – Fall

Full Board training (Fall session) took place on November 28th and 29th. Day one consisted primarily of presentations by most of the treatment and recovery facilities in the lower mainland to Board Members and Corrections Branch staff. Day two was a working session on the Board's redrafted policy and procedures and an afternoon presentation by Ministry of Children and Family Development on the Youth Justice Act.

Program Highlights

Victim Inclusion in Parole Hearings

The BC Board of Parole has welcomed victims since 1996 to participate in parole hearings.

Aboriginal Recognition

Aboriginal offenders have been, historically, over-represented in provincial and federal institutions. The BC Board of Parole believes that the parole process must be inclusive and sensitive to aboriginal cultural and justice traditions. To assist in meeting this goal, the Board attempts to maintain an aboriginal presence on the Board.

Female Offenders

The Chair of the Board is a member of the Exchange of Services Advisory Committee as well as Joint Committee as a result of the Board's responsibility to provide a parole service to the provincial and female offenders at Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women. Both committees are mandated by the Exchange of Services Agreement between the Province and Government of Canada that sets out the parameters of service for federal female offenders incarcerated at Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women. The Exchange of Services Committee is a working committee dealing with front-line federal/provincial problems in the institution. It recommends solutions and initiatives to Joint Committee, the decision-making body.

The BC Board of Parole also works closely with the Elizabeth Fry Society of Canada, especially in regard to resource options for provincial and federal female offenders.

Public Education

Board Members are encouraged to become involved in their communities and participate in justice forums and media interviews in an effort to place a human face on release decision making. Their participation is encouraged through a formal round-table that is set aside for reporting at every Board training session.

Partnership

The BC Board of Parole enjoys a long history of co-operation with the British Columbia Corrections Branch. The Board has also provided a suspension service for youths released on conditional releases from court and institutions. The proclamation of the Youth Criminal Justice Act provided an opportunity for the Board to review the service provided to Ministry of Children and Family Development and develop a Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of suspension services within the new Act.

Policy and Procedure Manual

The Board's Policy and Procedure Manual underwent an extensive review, reorganization and re-write in Fiscal Year 2002-2003. The new manual reflects the impending changes to the Federal Provincial Agreement on the Transfer of Offenders as well as changes in practice that have occurred since the last revision in 1996.

Events and Actions

Administrative Justice Review

In Fiscal Year 2002-2003, the Board and other agencies concentrated on implementing the concepts outlined in the Administrative Justice Review's White Paper. The focus was on independence and accountability, appointments, statutory powers, standards of review and judicial reviews.

Institutional Closures

The Corrections Branch, our immediate partner, underwent review as part of the Core Program Review in Fiscal Year 2002-2003. The resulting closure of institutions has allowed the Board to promote greater consistency in fewer institutions and will likely decrease to some extent the total number of Board Members required to meet the Boards' obligations under its administrative agreement with Corrections Branch. The closure of a small number of community corrections offices has not impacted the Board.

The most significant related event for the Board was the announced decision to let the Federal Provincial Agreement for the Transfer of Offenders to expire at the end of Fiscal Year 2003-2004 with the resultant closure of the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women. The Board has participated in ongoing consultation with Federal and Provincial representatives for the orderly turn-over of the federal female caseload.

Office Move

An opportunity for a move of the Boards office presented itself through the expiration of its lease on the Burnaby Metrotown office. The new office in New Westminster represents a substantial saving on building occupancy charges for government and an excellent location for the Board.

The boardroom is available to all government ministries and agencies and is used extensively as a result of the Board's centralized location in New Westminster.

National and International Involvement

Canadian Association of Paroling Authorities

The British Columbia Board of Parole is a member of the Canadian Association of Paroling Authorities. Membership consists of the four Canadian paroling authorities: the National Parole Board of Canada, the British Columbia Board of Parole, the Quebec Board of Parole and the Ontario Board of Parole. The Association meets two times per year to review legislative issues, policy, trends and other issues particular to parole nationally and provincially.

Spring Meeting

The Spring meeting of the Canadian Association of Paroling Authorities took place in Quebec on April 15th and 16th. Standing agenda items are Chairs' reports, victims, aboriginal offenders, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and statistics. Agenda items for this meeting included dealing with offenders applying for parole who have been convicted of offences that involved a death, recruiting Board Members, youth justice reform, Transfer of Parole Jurisdiction Agreement, issues relative to parole and police informants and internal complaint mechanisms for boards.

Fall Meeting

The Fall meeting of the Association took place in Ottawa on May 27th and 28th, 2003. In addition to the standing items, the agenda included online training for board members, ongoing development of a communication strategy, board member training with regard to conducting hearings for female offenders and a meeting with three Ottawa journalists to discuss media views of conditional release, what can be improved and how the boards and media can better work together.

BC has been using components of online training for three years and will follow up on the discussion at the next meeting which is to be held in British Columbia in Fiscal Year 2003-2004.

Association of Paroling Authorities International

The Chair of the Board is a member of the Association of Paroling Authorities International. The Association is the recognized voice for the highest professional standards of responsible parole practices. APAI demonstrates, through established values, that the parole process of the criminal justice system is an essential element for making societies safer and better places to live.

BUDGET

The Board is responsible for an annual budget of $690,000. Of this total, $246,579 is dedicated to Board Member hearing expenses and the remainder is allocated to office support and operations.